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Grooming Salon Policy

Re: Anal Gland Expressions

Naturally 4 Paws does not perform anal gland expressions as part of any service offering. It's our philosophy that this process should only be performed by licensed veterinary personnel, and only when medically necessary. We believe that anal gland expression should not be a recurring procedure applied to a healthy animal, as serious consequences can result.

To understand our philosophy, we would like to introduce you to a very progressive holistic veterinarian, Dr. Karen Becker, D.V.M. She provides a very informative website, videos and is a great wealth of information regarding natural nutrition and the holistic approach to treating our animal friends. All of the data contained with this letter can be found on her website at the following address:

<http://healthypets.mercola.com/sites/healthypets/archive/2009/12/23/your-pets-anal-glands.aspx>

To summarize; anal glands are little sacs just inside our dogs (and cats) rectums. Their primary purpose is to secrete a very stinky substance during defecation that excretes pheromones. This is why you always see dogs sniffing poop... it's like a business card and let's other dogs know who they are.

The anal glands are meant to be expressed through the defecation process. Healthy stools are firm and solid and automatically express these glands. Dr. Becker sites a variety of causes that can contribute to anal gland issues, including allergies, inflammation or improper diet. However, in her clinic she finds the #1 cause as "Unnecessary trauma through recurrent expression". And if the procedure is performed improperly, permanent damage can result.

Grooming schools in the mid-1900s (and some "old school" programs today) taught students to express anal glands as a courtesy to every client. While they had the best of intentions, performing that procedure on a healthy pet can actually do more harm than good.

Most pets have perfectly healthy anal glands. But if you suspect that your companion might be dealing with an anal gland issue, please watch for these symptoms; scooting or dragging the rear across the floor; constantly licking or chewing near the rectum; consistently soft or mushy stools; a foul or "fishy" smell coming from our dog's rear. If you notice these symptoms, it may be a good idea to schedule a check-up with your vet.

Our goal here at Naturally 4 Paws is to help you make your pet be as beautiful as possible, both on the inside and the out. If your furry companion experiences allergies or frequently has loose or soft stools, it could be an indication that their diet is not optimal for their digestive system. Our entire team is here to answer your questions and to assist you in finding the diet that is best for your furry friend.

We hope that this letter provides a sufficient explanation for our policy. If not, we encourage you to read Dr. Becker's entire article on her website, or feel free to pose additional questions to our team.

Sincerely,

Your friends @ Naturally 4 Paws